

FISCAL YEAR 2009 APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS

GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE -- REP. Michael Burgess (TX-26)

Must be completed and submitted NO LATER than COB March 7, 2008

Please submit completed questionnaire to josh.martin@mail.house.gov

PLEASE NOTE: ALL REQUESTS MUST INCLUDE A FORMAL LETTER OF REQUEST ON OFFICIAL LETTERHEAD EXPLAINING THE PROJECT. THIS QUESTIONNAIRE SHOULD ACCOMPANY, NOT REPLACE, A FORMAL LETTER OF REQUEST AND ANY OTHER QUESTIONNAIRE

I. PROJECT BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

1. Please provide a formal name for this project: Mentoring Children of Military Personnel

2. Please describe the project and its purpose:

The Mentoring Children of Military Personnel (MCMP) demonstration program recognizes that military children and families face multiple challenges before, during and after deployment. In general, the comprehensive program model is designed to help military families prepare for and successfully navigate deployment through matching children of military personnel with a Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) mentor. Specifically, the MCMP demonstration program includes three phases: (1) **Pre-Deployment Mentoring** – BBBS mentoring prepares children of military personnel for deployment via the use of family group conferencing to prepare for the challenges of deployment; (2) **Deployment Mentoring** – matching BBBS mentors with children impacted by parental deployment and utilizing specialized resources to stay connected and strengthen families during the period of deployment; and (3) **Post-Deployment Mentoring** – BBBS mentoring to help children and families reunite after deployment via the use of evidence-based strategies to develop solutions to post-deployment problems and sustain families.

The proposed MCMP demonstration program will be piloted in 3 to 5 sites across the State of Texas, specifically through BBBS offices near military bases, and is expected to cost \$2.5M. The program targets approximately 1650 children ages 6-14 with a parent deployed as an active duty member of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, National Guard or Reserves. While the demonstration program is not currently funded, the Department of Defense (DoD), sponsor is Senator John Cornyn. The MCMP program is not on any Service's Unfunded Requirements /Priority List or in the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP).

3. Please outline the project plan, including the finance plan:

The MCMP program will cost \$2.5M to recruit, match, enroll, support and sustain 1650 one-to-one mentoring relationships of children of military personnel. Funding includes cost of consumable supplies, recruitment materials, criminal background checks, enrollment/matching process, professional leadership and support staff, and supplemental trainings and activities. (Budget attached)

In general, quality one-to-one adult/child mentoring relationships predict positive youth development outcomes when they are close, consistent and enduring. Specifically, the extant body of research supports the claim that strong mentoring relationships reduce a variety of problem behaviors among at-risk youth. Studies evaluating BBBS mentoring programs note that a child mentored in the BBBS structure are: **46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs; 27% less likely to begin using alcohol; 52% less likely to skip school; and 37% less likely to skip a class. The youth improved relationships with their families and peers.**

The MCMP demonstration program is modeled on this empirical evidence and the requested funds are intended to design, develop and implement the demonstration program in 5 pilot sites across the State of Texas. The

demonstration program is expected to cost \$2.5M and the additional funds are required to improve mission readiness and outcomes for military personnel and their children and families.

Throughout the State of Texas, there are approximately 114,000 active military personnel assigned to 16 operational military bases: Brooks AFB (San Antonio), Dyess AFB (Abilene), Fort Bliss (El Paso), Fort Hood (Killeen), Fort Sam Houston (San Antonio), Goodfellow AFB (San Angelo), Kelly AFB (San Antonio), Lackland AFB (San Antonio), Laughlin AFB (Johnstone), NAS Corpus Christi (Corpus Christi), NAS JRB Fort Worth (Fort Worth), NAS Kingsville (Kingsville), NS Ingleside (Ingleside), Randolph AFB (Universal City), Red River Army Depot (Texarkana) and Sheppard AFB (Wichita Falls).

Previously, Big Brothers Big Sisters has developed similar programs at Dyess AFB and Goodfellow AFB via TRIAD funds. The proposed FY09 federal appropriation will build on the existing program and as stated above will mentor 1650 children of military personnel on a minimum of 5 military bases in Texas.

II. BENEFIT TO THE 26th DISTRICT AND/OR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1. Please explain how this project will improve life, the economy or the general welfare of the 26th District and/or the country at-large. Please be specific (i.e. outline number of jobs created, savings to economy or taxpayers, improve national security):
2. Please explain why this project should be considered a priority.

ANSWERS to SECTION II, # 1 and # 2 combined:

The United States converted its military to an all-volunteer force in 1972. Since then, the armed services has transitioned from a body largely comprised of unattached men without family obligations to a force that is now the province of both men and women, more than half of whom have family commitments. This change has broad implications for military children and families—and mission readiness as the new millennium advances. Today, military personnel and their families face extraordinary stress before, during and after deployment. While the physical and psychological risks of active combat for soldiers are well known, the implications of deployment for military children and families have not been documented.

Recent research results reveal that while all military personnel deployed to combat regions are at risk for several negative outcomes, military personnel that are parents constitute an especially vulnerable group, due to their complex commitments to the families that they leave behind. Results show that deployed military personnel are at an increased risk of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety and continuing high stress levels before, during and after deployment. Other results show that although marriage rates are higher among military personnel, divorce rates are also higher relative to civilian populations. Higher divorce rates among military personnel can be attributed to a variety of factors including the younger age at which military personnel marry, elevated stress levels and conflict surrounding issues of deployment and separation. Still other results show that rates of severe spousal aggression have been found to be significantly higher for military personnel, and the probability of spousal violence tends to increase with the length of deployment.

The DoD estimates that 592,646 active duty service members have children under the age of 23, a majority of whom are fathers. The growing number of parents in the military has resulted in unintended consequences including an increase in the number of children who experience separations from parents on a regular basis.

Separation due to deployment has been found to increase a variety of problem behaviors among children both during and after deployment. In cases in which mothers report high levels of disruption and distress as a result of deployment, children's behavior problems are heightened. Teachers also report that children whose fathers are away because of military service experience academic and adjustment problems. Behavior and developmental problems associated with deployment are particularly salient for boys. Studies have found that young boys of military fathers regularly demonstrate poorer peer relations, elevated unhappiness and increased conduct problems. In the long term, researchers have found that adolescent children of combat veterans are at risk for poorer attitudes towards school and parents, as well as increased depressive symptoms and anxiety. The mentors "Bigs" will offer a safe and stable relationship, as well as a positive outlet for these youth to express their feelings.

While the aforementioned challenges facing military children impacted by parental deployment are formidable, recent research reveals that mentoring matters in the lives these of youth. In general, quality one-to-one adult/child mentoring relationships predict positive youth development outcomes when they are close, consistent and enduring. Specifically, the extant body of research supports the claim that strong mentoring relationships reduce a variety of problem behaviors among at-risk youth.

This FY09 federal appropriation request speaks to the core needs of military families, not only those associated with NAS in Fort Worth, but also those assigned to military bases in the USA and outside the country. This initiative is an idea whose time has come, a concept which can not be ignored because our beloved country can ill afford to lose the next generation, the children of our military. NAS Fort Worth will serve as one of the strategic pilot sights administered by BBBS of North Texas. Big Brothers Big Sisters has the administrative structure statewide to be able to manage such a far-sweeping project and will do so with the compassionate professionalism for which Big Brothers Big Sisters has come to be known. As a first-of-its kind statewide initiative, the potential of this program catching on in other states in the years to come has far reaching implications. Texas is the place to start.

2. Please explain why this project should be considered a priority: (See answer above)

III. REQUEST

1. Amount of money you are requesting: \$2.5M

2. Agency from which you are requesting funds: Defense

3. Account from which you are requesting funds: Senator Cornyn is carrying this request on the Senate side, and I do not know what account this falls under.

IV. FUNDING HISTORY

1. What is the total project cost and can you provide a federal-state/local-other funding breakdown?

Except for the \$100,000 in TRIAD funds that launched this program at Dyess and Goodfellow, no additional funds have been secured. Budget attached.

2. Has the project ever received federal funds before? If so, please elaborate. NO

3. Has the project received state, local or private funds before? If so, please elaborate. Not, specifically, although the BBBS organizational structure and overall budgets across Texas (approximately \$15,000) will be invested in the success of this program and Big Brothers Big Sisters will see matching funds for this project. (See above)

4. Can you demonstrate a commitment for future funds from state, local, or private sectors? If so, please elaborate to the extent possible. Absolutely because every Big Brothers Big Sisters program has the

support of state, local and private sector funds. The administrative costs of BBBS are covered by a wide spectrum of funds across Texas at \$15M. Matching funds will be sought for this initiative.

5. How do you intend to spend federal funds for this project (operating, construction, studies, equipment purchase, salaries, other)? Budget attached

6. Does the project request stem from a currently-funded federal program (i.e., an already existing congressional authorization)? If so, please explain and be as specific as possible. NO

V. PROJECT HISTORY

1. Please briefly explain the level of support for the project in the local and any other community (if letters of support exist, please attach to this form). Letters of support for Big Brothers Big Sisters initiatives are replete, including Senator John Cornyn (State Honorary Chair), Governor Rick Perry (originator of the BBBS partnership for mentoring children of prisoners in Texas), Attorney General Greg Abbott (former State Honorary Chair), RR Commissioner Michel Williams (former State Honorary Chair), T. Boone Pickens (\$2M supporter of BBBS), Christina Melton Crain (as Chair of TDCJ partners with BBBS in mentoring children of prisoners), T. D. Jakes (partnership with The Potter's House), Senator Royce West, Senator Kim Brimer, Senator Chris Harris, etc, etc.

(Please excuse the fact that I have not included letters of support, as my time is very limited due to a misunderstanding on my part about the deadline but I will gladly do so, if deemed necessary.)

2. Has the project encountered any objections within the local or other interested communities? If so, please describe (if letters or official records exist noting objections to the project, please attach to this form). NO.

3. Please briefly explain the current stage and expected timeline of the project in a great a detail as possible. Timeline/budget attached

VI. CONTACTS

1. Who is the primary point of contact for the request?

Olivia Eudaly, State Executive Director of Amachi Texas (A joint initiative of the Office of the Governor, Texas Department of Criminal Justice and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Texas)

T. Charles Pierson, CEO BBBS of North Texas and President BBBS of Texas

2. Contact information (telephone and e-mail):

Olivia Eudaly

817-919-9475

oeudaly@bbbsnt.org

3. Mailing address of entity that would receive the funding?

Big Brothers Big Sisters

450 E. John Carpenter Freeway

Irving, Texas 75060

VII. TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS - N/A

1. How much of this request can be spent in fiscal year 2009?

2. If this is a highway, transit, rail, or aviation request, did you check eligibility with the state DOT, FTA, FRA, or FAA?

2a. If yes, did the agency indicate the project is eligible under the account requested?

3. If this is an FHWA request, is the project considered by the state and/or regional transportation officials as critical to their needs?

4. If a highway request, is the project on the state's transportation improvement plan?

PRIORITY PROJECT REQUEST CRITERIA

CERTIFICATION:

I, Olivia Eudaly, ATTEST THAT THIS PROJECT REQUEST MADE ON BEHALF OF

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Texas MEETS THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

1. All appropriations requests must be a priority for the 26th District and/or the country-at large as defined as enhancing life, liberty, or the general welfare.
2. All requests must be a proper and wise use of federal taxpayer dollars and must be justified as such. Projects that include a commitment to match federal funds will receive priority consideration.
3. All requests will be immediately posted on the website and supporting documentation made available to press outlets and interested individuals.
4. None of the funding requested will be used for a building, program, or project that has been named for Congressman Michael C. Burgess, M.D. No request will be made that Congressman Burgess or his spouse has any financial interest.
5. All requests shall be made in accordance with House of Representatives rules, and within Appropriations Committee deadlines. No funding request will be submitted after the deadline established by the Committee

Name of person certifying: T. Charles Pierson

Title of person certifying: CEO Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Texas
President of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Texas

Project name as it will appear in the bill ~~Mentoring Children of Military Personnel~~ _____

Legal name of entity making request ~~Big Brothers Big Sisters of Texas~~ _____

Address ~~450 E. John Carpenter Freeway, Irving, Texas 75060~~ _____

T. Charles Pierson

Signature

March 6, 2008

Date